

EARLY POTATOES VERY IMPORTANT

Some Essential Points in Growing That Average Gardener Is Apt to Overlook.

FOOD SUPPLY MUST BE READY

Good, Plump, Disease-Free Seed and Plenty of Fertilizer Are Essential—Keep Bugs Off by Dusting or Spraying.

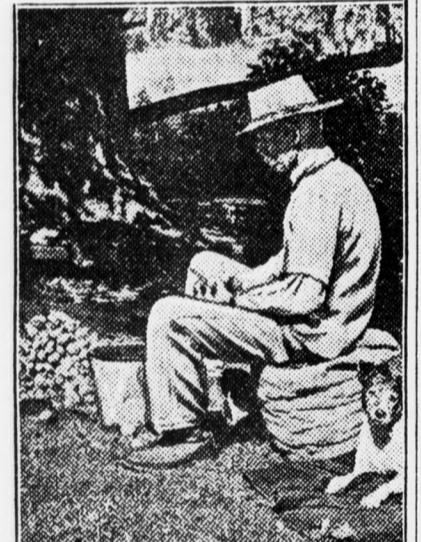
(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Irish potatoes must grow in most home gardens. They are just a few plants in the potato-growing game that the home gardener is likely to overlook which are very important. First of all, potatoes grow quickly, and their food supply will be available when you need it the most. Second, they are heavy feeders and want plenty to draw upon. In other words, the soil for Irish potatoes must not only be rich but also in the right plant and in the right amounts. Look for what was well manured the previous season, and which contains plenty of organic matter is best. The first step in preparing the soil will be to spade or plow it in a depth of eight or nine inches, then break up the clods. If there be any, and pulverize the soil practically as deep as it is spaded or plowed.

How to Use Fertilizer.
Common fertilizers give good results in growing potatoes, but if the fertilizer contains potash, as potatoes require more potash than is usually present in the soil, it is best to use bone meal or rock phosphate. Fertilizer manufacturers mix special brands for potatoes, and a number of them will depend upon the fertilizer of the soil, but a rule eight pounds to each 100 feet of row will be about right. To make this job easier, it is better to make a furrow or hollow and drop the pieces of seed potato, cover them with an inch or two of soil, then scatter the fertilizer along the rows so that it will be well worked into the soil before covering the covering of the seed. Another method is to scatter the fertilizer in the furrow and mix it with the soil before dropping the pieces of seed potato.

BEST KIND OF SEED.

Small, shrivelled potatoes, left in the bottom of the barrel at the end of winter, are not for seed. Only plump, disease-free potatoes, on which the sprouts are beginning to start, should be used for seed. Potatoes grown in Michigan, Wisconsin, or some other special seed producing section will as a rule give best results. Seedsman get the seed potatoes



Potatoes Should Be Cut Into Chunky Pieces With At Least One Eye to a Piece.

shipped in by the carload and then sell them to gardeners in small quantities. It takes about 100 pounds (one pound) of seed potatoes to plant an acre. One bushel of seed will plant one-tenth of an acre, which is a space 43 feet wide by 100 feet long. A pack of seed potatoes (10 pounds) should plant about 100 bushels, or twice as many as one good eye to a piece.

Seed potato should not be cut until ready to plant. Whenever seed potatoes are cut, it is important to stand the cut surfaces upright, out of the sun, and the seed loses vitality very rapidly. Soggy or diseased seed potato should not be used for planting. The variety of potato plant will determine the time for cutting, and the seed loses vitality very rapidly.

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